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tragedy in the heart of South America. Mr. Thouar, a young French traveller, is now facing dangers of every description, in his attempt to discover the remains of our unfortunate countrymen. Gathering information, and supported by good will on all sides, he is making slow but regular advance. We can only hope that he will attain his object; while we do not ignore the dangers to which he so generously exposes himself in trying to penetrate, accompanied only by an interpreter, a country inhabited by Indians who overthrew the mission of Dr. Crevaux. Our warmest hopes for success go with him in his noble undertaking.

At the extreme south of America, at Tierra del Fuego, a French mission, established a year ago, has been commissioned, in accordance with the international programme, to make meteorological and magnetic observations. We look forward to the next return of the guard-ships, whose work, accomplished under the direction of Mr. Martial, commander of the *Romanche*, will form a valuable contribution to the physical geography of these parts.

Finally, after a successful expedition to the northern latitudes, in the polar seas, which, since the voyage of the *Recherche*, have scarcely seen the French flag, one of our countrymen, Mr. Charles Rabot, is at present continuing in Russian Lapland the investigations which he began in Sweden. The region which he includes still offers a vast field for geographical and geological study.

Such, my dear colleagues, are the chief means by which the advance of French geography, in its most active and most persistent form is disclosed. I might still speak to you at length, but we must not deserve the reproach of weaving for ourselves crowns; and, in the noble titles I have just recalled to you, we should see rather the obligations they place upon us than the satisfaction which they bring to our proper national pride.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

##### Marriage laws of the Omahas and cognate tribes.

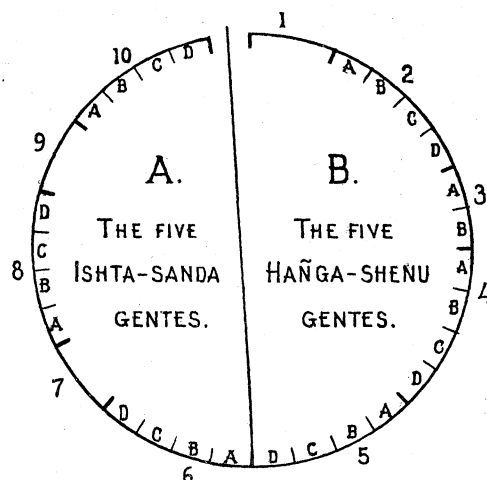
THE Dakotas or Sioux still have mother-right in some of their tribes, and I cannot say how far the following statements apply to them; but the Omahas, Ponkas, Kansas, Osages, and others have father-right, and are governed by the principles here given, with one exception, — the Kansas have recently disregarded their laws, and have begun to marry in the gens.

The Omaha tribe is divided into ten gentes or clans, each gens having its special place in the tribal circle. In the figure the numerals denote the gentes, and the letters the sub-gentes.

Suppose that I belong to 1, the Elk gens, which is also my father's gens: I cannot marry any female of that gens. If my mother belongs to 2, a buffalo gens, I cannot marry any woman of that gens.

Suppose that my father's mother belonged to 3 a, my mother's mother to 4 a, my father's father's mother to 5 a, my mother's father's mother to 6 a, my father's mother's mother to 7, and my mother's mother's mother to 8 a: I cannot marry any women of 3 a, 4 a, 5 a, 6 a, 7, or 8 a, if I know of their re-

lationship to me; but I can marry any women of the other sub-gentes, 3 b, 3 c, 3 d, 4 b, 4 c, 4 d, 5 b, 5 c, 5 d, 6 b, 6 c, 6 d, 8 b, 8 c, or 8 d, as they are not my full kindred.



I can also marry any women of 9 or 10, if they are not forbidden to me for other reasons; that is, if they are not my affinities, such as the wives (*real or possible*) of those whom I call my fathers, mother's brothers, grandfathers, sons, sister's sons, or grandsons.

Principles considered. — 1. Marriage in the father's gens forbidden. 2. Marriage in the mother's gens forbidden. 3. The regulation of the sub-gens. 4. Potential or possible marriages must always be kept in mind, and kinship terms are based upon them.

J. OWEN DORSEY.

Washington, D.C.

##### Francis Galton's proposed 'Family registers.'

Mr. Francis Galton is now planning to push his inquiries into the laws of heredity upon a more extensive and systematic scale than ever before. The success of his early work, 'Hereditary genius,' led him to observations in a wider field, which extended over several years, and were collected in his very valuable book, 'Inquiries into the human faculty,' which appeared last spring. His new proposal involves the collection of a large number of family biological histories, to extend over three or four generations, and to be obtained by circulating an exhaustive schedule of printed questions. The writer has just received a copy of the latter, together with a prospectus of the general plan, which Mr. Galton will call 'Family registers.' The revised schedules will shortly be ready for distribution. In the mean time an abstract of the prospectus and schedule may be given.

Mr. Galton foresees the difficulties which he will encounter; and, appreciating that the obtaining of accurate family histories of health and disease among laymen is almost out of the question, his prospectus appeals principally to the medical profession. Among doctors, all inherited disease is a disease, and not necessarily an hereditary disgrace, as most of the laity are apt to regard it. In this class, also, the scientific interest attached to inherited imperfections of physique or mind often overbears every other feeling. At all events, although the *anonymous* will be strictly maintained, Mr. Galton seems to expect that few non-professional persons will be ready even

to put upon paper the rather searching register of replies.

The narrowest scope of inquiry, to be of any value, must embrace three generations; but the results will be far more reliable when they cover four. The latter would relate to at least thirty-six persons, which Mr. Galton reckons as follows: "On the side of the contributor there are his two parents, four grand-parents, an average of three uncles and aunts on each of the two sides, three brothers or sisters, and himself: this makes sixteen persons. There is another set of sixteen for the relatives of his wife in the same degrees. Lastly, I allow an average of four children." A single family register of this size, therefore, at least involves the filling-out of nearly thirty-six of the schedules, which will be no light task, even with the most favorable opportunities of obtaining information. The persons whom Mr. Galton anticipates will assist him the most are young physicians, married and with children. In case the grand-parents are living, their field of information will naturally be very wide. Partly as an inducement to men of this class to undertake such a task, partly as a pecuniary return for the time which it must necessarily occupy, a series of prizes will be offered, amounting, altogether, to £500, including, probably, ten prizes of £25 each, and others not to exceed £50 nor fall short of £5. The returns are to be sent with mottoes, but no signature; the name and address to be enclosed in a separate envelope bearing the motto. The merit of the returns will be estimated by the clearness and exhaustiveness of statement, the number of generations treated of, and the appendix (see beyond).

The returns asked for are in abstract as follows:

1. A separate and full biological history of each member of the family in the direct line of ascent;
2. A very brief statement of the main biological facts in the lives of members of the collateral lines of ascent, that is, of the uncles and aunts, great-uncles and great-aunts, etc.;
3. A full description of the main sources of information for 1 and 2;
4. An appendix which will include an analysis of the medical history of the family, showing the peculiarities which have, and have not, been transmitted, and their identical or changed form. All communications to be addressed to Francis Galton, 42 Rutland Gate, London (S. W.), England.

Mr. Galton has reduced the collection of statistics to a fine art, having arranged this schedule with the greatest ingenuity. The near and remote relationships are indicated by simple symbols; and, by means of horizontal and transverse columns, the required facts can be condensed into an astonishingly small space. Each schedule is intended to cover six periods in the life of the person described, from childhood to late in life, and at each of these periods to give a statement of, *A*, conditions of life; *B*, personal description; *C*, medical life-history. Under *A* are such topics as town or country residence, and sanitary influences generally. Under *B* are descriptions of feature and physique, of habits of work and muscular force and quickness, keenness of sight and dexterity, artistic and allied capacities, peculiarities of character and temperament. Under *C* are diseases, accidents, malformations, age at death, etc. Other facts solicited are, order of birth, age at marriage, number and sex of children. All this is upon one side of a double sheet, and relates to one person in the direct line of ascent. Upon the reverse of the sheet, similar inquiries are made in the collateral lines, or among the brothers and sisters of the person described.

Mr. Galton believes that the interest in each family

register will increase rapidly as the investigation goes on, and family histories will result of far more accuracy than could be collected in any less methodical system. The scheme is so much more comprehensive than any thing which has preceded it, that it certainly promises us a much deeper insight into the laws of heredity than we have at present. The moral value of this, and, in fact, of much of the life-work of this author, lies in the dissemination of the stern truth, which is as old as the Mosaic law, that the character of the next generation depends, perhaps, less than we are apt to think upon the education and training we prepare for them, and more upon the life-conduct of the present and the preceding generations.

HENRY F. OSBORN.

### MAUDSLEY'S BODY AND WILL.

*Body and will: being an essay concerning will in its metaphysical, physiological, and pathological aspects.* By HENRY MAUDSLEY, M.D. London, Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co., 1883. 8+333 p. 8°.

CONSIDERED with respect to its announced purpose, this book is one of the most unfortunate and disappointing that we have ever seen bearing the name of an able man on the title-page. The purpose, as set forth on the titlepage and in the preface, seems indeed a noble one. Of will, in its pathological aspect at least, Dr. Maudsley has, one would suppose, the best possible right to speak. And we all have so much to learn about all its aspects, that we come to the book, even after previous experience of the author's eccentricities, with hope of getting some real instruction. That the freedom of the will is to be discussed, we learn without fear: for, old as the topic is, an ingenious man may have something new to say about it; and a straightforward statement of the doctrine of determinism, made from the physiological point of view, may well be useful and instructive, even if it should fail to be new. But, with much more interest than he feels in the promised wrangle over the freedom of the will, the student of psychology looks forward to what is promised in the preface, where Dr. Maudsley tells us that he has long been engaged in dealing with "concrete minds, that must be observed, studied, and managed;" that he has been trying to find out "why individuals feel, think, and do as they do, how they may be actuated to feel, think, and do differently, and in what way best to deal with them so as to do one's duty to one's self and them." In consequence, he says, "I have no choice but to leave the barren heights of speculation for the plains on which men live and move and have their being." He desires, then, "to bring home to mental philosophers the necessity of taking serious account of a class of facts and thoughts which, though they are